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AUTHOR Rabin, Chaim
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ABSTRACT

One of the main problems Israeli language planning has focused on is the linguistic integration of newcomers and of not-so-recent immigrants whose linguistic adaptation has been slow. The bodies active in this are the Section of Adult Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Absorption, and the Jewish Agency for Israel. Other contributors include radio, television, newspapers, universities, the army and the police. Israeli institutions also assist the teaching of Hebrew outside Israel, within Jewish communities abroad, through the Jewish Agency, which provides training and teachers. One problem facing the learner of Hebrew is the "nikund" or system of diacritics indicating vowels and certain distinctive features of consonants. None of the slightly different simplified systems for second-language learners has been approved by the Language Academy. Another problem is the difference between spoken and written styles. The Academy for the Hebrew Language, the body officially entrusted with internal language planning, is concerned with, among other areas: (1) spelling and grammar standardization; (2) vocabulary enlargement and standardization; and (3) maintenance of correct Hebrew in public media. (AM)

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LANGUAGE TREATMENT IN ISRAEL:
Especially the development and spread of Hebrew

Chaim Rabin*

Israel has two official languages, Hebrew and Arabic. The state engages in planning activities regarding Arabic only insofar as it provides a full range of services in Arabic, maintains schools for Muslim, Christian and Druze children in which literary Arabic is both taught and used as a medium of instruction[1], and teaches Arabic as obligatory subject in the Jewish schools, both in its literary and in its colloquial varieties. In all other aspects Arabic is served by language planning activities of the neighboring Arab states. There is also a group of a few thousand Jewish religious extremists which runs its own schools with Yiddish as language of instruction and traditional Hebrew and Aramaic religious texts as the only subject taught, with the tacit assent of the government. All other Jewish schools have Hebrew as language of instruction.

One of the main problems Israeli language planning has focused on is the linguistic integration of newcomers and of not-so-recent immigrants whose linguistic adaptation has been slow. The bodies active in this are the Section of Adult Education (henceforth S.A.E.) of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Absorption, and the Jewish Agency for Israel (a world-wide body concerned with Jewish education outside Israel and with encouraging Jewish immigration to Israel). They jointly run a country-wide network of language-learning centers for adults (*Ulpanim*, singular *Ulpan*) of three types: full-time for professionals, half-time combined with agricultural work in a *Kibbutz*, and part-time classes. The Education Ministry's section for secondary schools runs a separate network of courses for immigrant school children. The state-owned radio and television have various ways of teaching of Hebrew to immigrants, including special news services read slowly in simplified Hebrew. The universities have their own courses for their immigrant and foreign visiting students. The army and police also run their own language courses for those immigrants who serve in them. The S.A.E. publishes two weekly newspapers in simplified Hebrew, and the Labor Party has a weekly for immigrants in ordinary Hebrew, but printed with vowel diacritics (see below) and with an explanation of difficult words. Various bodies have produced series of booklets of information and literature in simplified Hebrew. The S.A.E. keeps methods, teaching plans, and organization of the Ulpan courses under constant review, organizes refresher courses for the Ulpan teachers, and has established a framework for research on teaching aspects. At both Israeli and foreign universities, M.A. and doctoral theses have been written on problems connected with teaching Hebrew as a second language. The Center of Applied Linguistics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem has a diploma course for teachers of Hebrew to adults as a second language. Admission requires a B.A. in Hebrew language and a Teacher's Certificate.

Israeli Institutions also play a role in guiding and assisting the teaching of Hebrew outside Israel. Within the Jewish communities abroad, Hebrew is taught both in its classical form as the language of liturgy, Bible, and other religious texts, and in its modern spoken form[2], with Israelis making up a considerable proportion of the teaching body. Israelis also supply most of the teachers in the widespread net of courses for adults. Biblical, and to a lesser extent medieval, Hebrew is taught at probably over 1,000 academic institutions in the world, but about 250 universities and colleges also teach Modern Hebrew[3]. The Jewish Agency sends teachers from

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Dr. Rabin is a professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and is a member of the Hebrew Academy.

Israel abroad for periods of 2-3 years, and maintains several training facilities in Israel for citizens of other countries wishing to teach Hebrew in their home countries. A center for training such people as well as Israelis wishing to teach Hebrew abroad and for research on such teaching, exists in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (chairman: Dr. C. Rinot). The Israeli Universities and relevant government bodies collaborate through the Committee for Hebrew Studies Abroad (address: P.O.B. 7413, Jerusalem). The Council on the Teaching of Hebrew (same address), a semi-official voluntary body, reviews developments in teaching Hebrew to adults in Israel and abroad, and publishes a Bulletin presenting in each number a different specialized bibliography of teaching materials.

One of the main problems facing the learner of Hebrew is the method of indicating vowels in the script. As normally written and printed, vowels are indicated in less than 50% of their occurrences, and that in a vague and irregular way. Full vowel indication is possible by a system of diacritics above and below the line, which distinguishes 14 signs to indicate the 5 vowels of present-day Hebrew. This system, called *Nikud*, in English "Pointing," also differentiates between *b* and *v*, *ka* and *kh*, *p* and *f*, by dots placed inside the character. The full range of combinations of vowel signs and consonant signs needed to print full *nikud* is about 400, or else printing of each line has to be done in three layers, with complicated adjustment. Moreover, for assuring correct *nikud*, special experts have to be employed. The educated Israeli has no difficulty in reading the spelling without *nikud*. For second-language learners, the *nikud* system has been simplified, but none of the slightly different systems employed, e.g., in the newspapers for immigrants, has so far been approved by the Language Academy.

Another problem is the difference between the spoken language and the written styles, which are rich in vocabulary and allusions to the ancient sources. During the great immigration wave of 1948-52, the S.A.E. established a Basic List of 1,000 words for the first stage of the *Ulpan*[4]. Around this grew the concept of an "Easy Hebrew" with 1,000+ words and simplified grammar and syntax, even with some minor concessions to colloquial grammar, practised in part of the above-mentioned publications for immigrants, and at one time even advocated by some as a medium for popular use. It appears, however, that the problem is gradually resolving itself. The evening papers and the sports press have by now developed an easy style close to the colloquial, and with the increasing use of the colloquial for dialogue in novels, there are indications that a more easily understood popular written style may emerge.

In order to serve immigrants (and foreign residents), the radio has regular broadcasts in English, French, Russian, Spanish, Hungarian, Roumanian, Georgian, Judaeo-Spanish (Ladino), Yiddish, and Moroccan Arabic. Daily or weekly papers appear in many immigrant languages; the daily papers are for the most part now owned by the Labor Party. The Jewish Agency also publishes periodicals in English, French, Spanish, and Yiddish. Other periodicals are brought out by private publishers, by immigrant organizations, or by *Landsmannschaften* (organizations of long-time residents hailing from the same country or district). All these bodies also publish books, both translated and original. The Israel Writers Union has sections for writers in several immigrant languages. While ostensibly serving new immigrants, these activities acquire more and more the character of language maintenance, as has been shown also by the protest campaigns of some of these language communities when it was planned to discontinue broadcasts in their language for reasons of economy. Also, the public attitude towards the "Jewish languages," such as Yiddish and Ladino, has become more accepting since the beginning of the sixties. First several universities instituted courses in Yiddish literature and language, later also in Ladino; from ca. 1970 one high-school, at Kiryat Hayyim, near Haifa, taught Yiddish as a foreign language, and from 1976/7 onwards high-schools can teach Yiddish and Ladino as foreign languages if there is demand for it. In August 1976 an international conference for furthering Yiddish took place at Jerusalem. It was attended by representatives of Israeli public bodies and political parties, as well as of the Jewish Agency, and got extensive coverage in the Hebrew press.

The history and organization of the Academy for the Hebrew Language, which is the body officially entrusted with internal language planning, has been described by Fellman (1976). Here we shall briefly describe its work[5] in the three fields of planning with which that body concerns itself: 1) spelling and grammar standardization, 2) vocabulary enlargement and standardization, 3) maintenance of correct Hebrew in public media.

In 1968 the Academy regularized the partial vowel indication in spelling without the vowel diacritics (see above). It also reformed this spelling system by making obligatory the distinction (by dots) between *b/v*, *k/kh*, *p/f*, *sh/s*, and *w/o/u*; however, some members of the Academy subsequently disputed the legality of the latter decision, and it was changed to a mere recommendation. A method for spelling foreign proper names in the new spelling, including the distinctive dots, and an added letter for *e*, was approved in 1976. As early as 1957, the spelling of Hebrew proper names in Roman characters on public notices was standardized. All decisions of the Academy become legally binding as soon as the Minister of Education and Culture publishes them in

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the official gazette *Reshumot;* however, experience with the 1957 and 1968 standardizations has shown that there is a considerable time lag between the official confirmation of the Academy rulings and their implementation. The 1957 transliteration is now seen on railway stations and in interurban road signs, but is slow in displacing the chaotic methods of romanizing street-name plates. The 1968 spelling is beginning to be taught in schools, but has not yet penetrated into newspapers and books, and the general public is largely unaware of its existence.

Grammar standardization is on two levels: one committee deals with problems arising in the work of terminology committees and with questions addressed to the Academy by outside bodies, the other is engaged at present in a systematic review of the inflection of nouns and adjectives. Only the decisions of the latter are confirmed by the plenum and published chapter by chapter. A committee for syntax was discontinued in 1973 after functioning for about two years. The Academy has so far been able to deal with only a minute part of the many undecided points in grammar and syntax, which are due largely to conflicting traditions deriving from different periods of the classical literature as well as to recent developments. The field is thus left to independent orthoepists who—as is to be expected—often differ. One of the leading orthoepists, Mr. A. Bendavid, was appointed by the Academy as supervisor of correct Hebrew on the radio. His views are publicized in the programme at prime listening times, "A Minute of Hebrew," which is well executed and considered authoritative by most listeners. The Ministry of Education, in a similar spirit, introduced into the schools and as a basis for questions in the Matriculation Examinations an orthoepic guide written with the participation of one of its senior officials (Bahat & Ron, 1960) and so made private-enterprise language planning decisive at a particularly sensitive point. None of the persons mentioned is a member of the Language Academy.

Word coining (cf. J. Fellman [1976], p. 6) is the most spectacular aspect of vocabulary standardization, but the new words constitute only a small percentage of the standardized terminology lists issued by the Academy. Most of the terms listed are either affirmations of existing usage or re-used vocabulary from ancient sources, and quite a proportion of many lists is taken up by loan-words, mainly internationally used Graeco-Latin terms for which Hebraization is not suggested.

From the outset, the Academy did its vocabulary work in lists for specific subjects, chosen for their social importance. For each subject a committee is formed of a few Academy members and of experts in the subject under discussion. The draft lists are circulated within the Academy and to a wide range of people in the profession catered to, and suggestions and corrections received from them are taken into account. Each list in its last stage is scanned by the Academy's Terminology Commission in the presence of the members of the relevant committee. Any points not settled are put up for discussion in the plenum before it votes to approve the list. The lists are published in separate booklets with translations of each term into English, French, and German; recently also translations into Russian have been prepared for immigrants from that country. A selection of terms of more general interest are also printed in *Lemad Leshonekha*[6], and in some cases government bodies or professional organizations republish a list in their internal periodicial publications.

An important part of the vocabulary work is done through the Central Committee for Terminology in Technology at Haifa, a joint venture of the Academy and the Haifa Israel Institute of Technology (Technion), with the co-operation of the Israel Institute of Standards, the Engineers' Associations and the Defence Forces. The Defence Forces also have terminology committees of their own for purely military matters. The police and some government departments also do their own current vocabulary standardization, which, like that of the army, is published only for internal use.

The committee system has proved its efficiency, but raises the problem of conflicting decisions regarding terms used in different disciplines and the utilization of the same existing or newly created word for different purposes. It is part of the task of the Terminology Commission to check this, but as the number of terms grows, human memory is not enough. For a time a card index was kept, but proved inefficient. Now a computerized integrated list is in course of preparation.

One aspect of the Academy's efforts to assure normatively correct Hebrew in public media has been mentioned when discussing the work of its representative on the radio. He, and more recently also his counterpart on the television, monitor broadcasts, hold briefing conferences with announcers, issue codes of rulings (Bendavid 1974) and have a say in selecting news-readers. Attempts to influence the Hebrew of the daily papers are intermittent, and take the form of meetings with editors, letters from Academy secretaries to point out mistakes, and lecture courses for journalists. Special committees for dealing with this problem and attempts to get Academy members to monitor newspapers and broadcasts have met with uneven response from members, who are of course aware of the problems inherent in establishing clear normative guidance and the need for careful discussion.

On June 21, 1976, the Israel parliament (the Knesset), held a three-hour debate on the need to combat deterioration of the language and to assure

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the use of correct Hebrew by public figures. The following resolution was passed: 1. The Knesset views with concern the multiplication of mistakes and the loss of established linguistic features in the language of Hebrew speakers, including public functionaries, radio announcers and actors; 2. It calls on kindergarten teachers and school teachers in all subjects to ensure that their pupils speak correct Hebrew and to work out improved methods for achieving this aim; 3. It calls on radio and television staff to use correct Hebrew speech and pronunciation, and recommends the establishment on television of a programme for inculcating correct Hebrew[7]; 4. The members of the Knesset are reminded of their duty to speak correct Hebrew in addressing the House.

The debate was widely reported in the public media, and bears witness to the widespread interest in linguistic matters and the public's desire for language planning. □

FOOTNOTES

[1] *The use of colloquial Arabic by Jews in conversation and as literary medium (Iraqi and Moroccan dialects) falls under the category of home languages, see below.*
[2] *Cf. Rabin (in press).*
[3] *A list of these is given in Lidovsky & Block (1976).*
[4] *Described in Rosén (1960).*
[5] *In the following discussion "Academy" also includes the Academy's predecessor, the Language Council, on which cf. Fellman (1976), p. 1.*
[6] *Cf. Fellman (1976), p. 6. These posters are now appearing as part of the periodical* Hed ha-Ulpan *published by the S.A.E.*
[7] *On the pattern of the radio's "Minute of Hebrew", cf. above.*

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PERUVIAN LANGUAGE DECREES

In May 27, 1975, the government of Peru declared the indigenous language Quechua in addition to Spanish as official language of the Republic. It also declared that starting in 1976, that the teaching of Quechua would be obligatory in all educational levels. It indicated that the Minister of Education would be responsible for preparing dictionaries, textbooks, and other materials necessary to comply with the law. In October, 1975, the Ministry of Education adopted a basic general alphabet for Quechua but in addition it recognized the need for extra symbols for the principal varieties from Ancash-Huailas, Ayacucho-Chanca, Cajamarca-Canaris, Cuzco-Callao and Junin-Huanca.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS: Overcoming the Language Barrier

A conference on this topic will be held in Luxembourg on May 3–6, 1977. This conference will consider problems arising from the establishment of Euronet in 1977, an organization which is to supply scientific, technical and economic information gotten from diverse origins. A closing panel will discuss the evolution of multilingual systems from the viewpoint of policy makers and users.

THE EAST-WEST CENTER is a national educational institution established in Hawaii by the United States Congress in 1960. Its purpose is to promote better relations and understanding between the United States and the nations of Asia and the Pacific area through cooperative study, training, and research. Since 1975, the Center has been administered by a public, nonprofit educational corporation, officially known as the "Center for Cultural and Technical Interchange Between East and West, Inc." An international Board of Governors consisting of distinguished scholars, business leaders, and public servants guides Center policies.

Each year more than 1,500 men and women from more than 60 nations and dependencies in the region participate in Center programs that seek cooperative solutions to problems of mutual consequence to East and West. Working in research and development projects with the Center's multidisciplinary and multicultural staff, participants include visiting scholars and researchers; leaders, policymakers, and other professionals; and graduate degree students, most of whom are also enrolled at the University of Hawaii. For each Center participant from the United States, two participants are sought from the Asian-Pacific area.

Center programs are conducted by five institutes addressing problems of communication, culture learning, food, population, and technology and development. A limited number of open grants are awarded each year for degree education and innovative research in areas not encompassed by institute programs.

The U.S. Congress provides basic funding for Center programs and a variety of awards to participants. Because of the cooperative nature of Center programs, financial support and cost-sharing are also sought from Asian and Pacific governments, public and private sectors, and individuals. The Center campus is on land adjacent to and provided by the University of Hawaii.

EAST-WEST CENTER HONOLULU, HAWAII